

**REGULAR MEETING
JULY 2, 2012**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, July 2, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Drake, Hurley, Kotkin, Manousos, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann.

Also present: Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk; Christine Fortunato, Chairperson WHS Building Committee; Rusty Malik, Quisenberry

Dolores Sassano led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

GENERAL COMMENTS

George Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, commented that the approach to solving the Culvert problems should maintain the integrity and the cache of the neighborhood and be appropriate to the area in his opinion. Town Manager Bridges appears to have a good handle on how to address the safety issues as well as his[George Ruhe] other concerns of doing it right the first time. He added that as long as the quality and work is appropriate and is accomplished, the current safety concerns will have been reduced and both the neighborhood and town will have been improved. Mr. Ruhe urged to make sure that there is a reasonable foundation when making the improvement. Mr. Ruhe also commented on a more permanent solution other than a chain link fence which was suggested.

Jim Clynch, 903 Ridge Rd, commented on a visitor stopping on Marsh Street. He stated that after the visitor introduced himself, he told him that he always admired his property and wanted to look around inside the house. Mr. Clynch said that the man stated that he owns seven restaurants in the greater Hartford area and when he asked him if he owned a restaurant in the Wethersfield area, the man responded that Wethersfield has a bad business reputation. Mr. Clynch wanted to bring this up to the council and urged changes that would attract businesses to Wethersfield. Mr. Clynch also commented briefly on the motor vehicle tax bill regarding the road improvement tax.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., commented on the bad economy and being harassed by callers when you are listed on the no-call list. He commented on the tax bills and how funds are being spent. He also commented on the high school referendum and the costs associated with that and the Housing Authority costs. He also commented on the town debt and the need to stop spending.

COUCIL REPORTS

Councilor Drake reported that the Infrastructure Committee met before this meeting and discussed three items. One was the new paving policy that they asked Mike Turner to put together and will come back to the town council. He noted that the basic highlight is that they asked him to address the small roads that do not get done so he is putting together a package where basically the first \$200,000 of the budget is going for roads that don't meet the algorithm in terms of velocity use and stated that we are going to try to fill in that gap of these roads that just don't get done. He reported that the second item they talked about was the Cloverdale guardrails and stated that we are going to fix it and have been working on it for a while. He noted that the Town Manager found the funds through left-over money somewhere around the \$10 to \$14 thousand dollar range and they will be going out to bid and fix it correctly. He stated that they are going to put the brick back, move the columns up, do the sidewalks and get things cleaned up the way they should be cleaned up. Councilor Drake also reported that they talked about the proposals for Wilkus Farm. He stated that they received three proposals and reviewed them. He also mentioned that one was a little bit outside the box and was forwarded it to Mr. Bridges who is going to get a little more information on it. The committee should then be prepared, hopefully shortly, to come back with some recommendation.

Councilor Kotkin reported that the Insurance Committee met shortly after the last meeting and mentioned that they do not meet in July or August. He reported that they are looking pretty hard at the possibility of recommending a claims audit to the Council which would require some expense on our part but it would help validate that the \$8 or \$9 million dollars a year claims that we pay are paid properly. He stated that that is something that will be coming to the Council this Fall.

Councilor Manousos reported that Budget Finance met and discussed the Bond Refunding opportunity that we have and how we should structure the savings from that refunding. He stated that the discussion that we had was whether to frontload the savings to smooth out the peaks in our projected debt service of the town, especially as it relates to the high school or to take an even savings on it over the life of the bonds or over a 15-year period. He also reported that the budget finance committee last week decided by majority to propose taking that savings and front loading it so that we can smooth out the peaks in the debt service of the town and that would give the most substantial value to taxpayers in town rather than spreading it out over the life. He added that it was not unanimous, but that is what was decided.

Councilor Roberts commented that the Memorial Day Committee met last Monday to review the parade and discuss any changes that should be made. She noted that overall, it was a successful parade and a meaningful ceremony at the cemetery. She also mentioned that if anyone has any comments over the summer about changes or suggestions to please get them to Sal Cucia at the Parks and Recreation Department or Larry Spellacy. They will be again in September to start working on next year's parade.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Console reported that a couple of his neighbors came over and they were discussing the Physical Services Department. He stated that he thought that they came over to complain, but stated that they came over to give recognition to the workers. He added that during the last couple of weeks, some sink holes appeared and the town crews came out and took care of them and the neighbors were very pleased. He stated that the neighbors said the crews were very professional, courteous and polite and didn't cause too much disruption in the road to fix everything and cleaned everything up very nicely. Deputy Mayor Console stated that he didn't think they received enough recognition at times; so he just wanted to reach out to the Physical Services Department, Mr. Bailey and his crew and thank them for the job they did.

Deputy Mayor Console reported that he continued his visits on the Berlin Turnpike at Bob's Stand and commented on a nice article about them published in Wethersfield Life. He stated that Bob's has a very friendly, well versed, knowledgeable staff, and that it is nice to do business there. Deputy Mayor Console added that in order to keep these businesses in town, we need to continue to support them. He commented that he plans to continue his visits on the Berlin Turnpike.

Deputy Mayor Console thanked Jeff Bridges for the timeline/outline on Jameswell Road. He also noted that there were some blight issues that needed to be taken a look at again with regards to Cedar Street, particularly between Crest St and Nott Street and Nott Street between Ridge Road going East to Wolcott Hill. He stated that he also received new ones that go along Church Street between Garden and Main Street on the South side with a couple of houses that are starting to get boats and cars. He requested if these could be checked out.

Deputy Mayor Console commented on the Police Department and the investigation that they are doing on the Pine Lane robbery and believes that they are close to finishing the investigation and making the appropriate arrest. He also mentioned that he read a nice article on Facebook regarding the retirement of David Scales documenting his career. He also remarked on some comments that were made on Facebook by former Police Chief Knapp regarding benefits offered by the Town for officers.

Counselor Kotkin commented that he thought that the letter that was included in the tax bill this year was well done. He suggested that they continue to send out something like it again next year and asked that they provide Councilors with an advance copy.

Counselor Kotkin wanted to pass something down to Jeff Bridges regarding the state of the tennis courts at Webb. Counselor Kotkin commented that Avon had a similar situation at the Middle School where they had padlocks on the courts for about six years and then raised some money through a series of sources in order to get \$182,000 to redo the courts. He stated that 20 percent of that money came from a grant from the United States Tennis Association and was hoping that as we go down the path to fixing those courts, maybe we might qualify for that help assuming it's available for public courts.

Mayor Hemmann commented that at the last meeting she received a letter from residents on Coleman Road and offered it to anyone who wanted to see the pictures and the petition that was passed. She also mentioned that she received a letter from a citizen in regards to one of the committee meetings and received some communication from Woodrow Warren if anyone was interested in seeing that as well. Mayor Hemmann also noted that Councilor Drake gave her communication that he received regarding blight on Wilcox Street and that she will pass that on to Mr. Bridges. She also reported on letters that have been sent to our legislative delegation and also to the MDC asking for some consultation related to the Jameswell Road area. Mayor Hemmann commented on a response to Mrs. Rapaport's concerns from the last meeting on the short strip of roadway between Byrd Road and Stillman Road. She stated that the Assistant Town Manager did some research with that regard so that is available for your reading.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Bridges commented on the Moody's AA2 last week and with the refunding coming up, it was good news.

COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Manousos moved **"TO BE IT RESOLVED THAT JEFF BRIDGES, TOWN MANAGER, AND NANCY STILWELL, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO MAKE, EXECUTE AND APPROVE ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD, A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES FOR A YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU GRANT,** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD that Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, and Nancy Stilwell, Director of Social and Youth Services are hereby authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Wethersfield, a contract between the State Department of Education and the Town of Wethersfield Department of Social and Youth Services. Said contract shall be in the amount up to \$27,916* for contributions to program services within the "Youth Services Bureau" for fiscal year 2012-2013.

Mr. Bridges explained that this is the annual grant renewal for funds from the State Department of Education to help support the Youth Services Bureau. He explained that the basic grant funds (\$21,666) are used for salary support for Youth Services staff and that the grant requires matching funds from the Town but no expenditures other than those budgeted. He added that the Enhancement Grant (\$6,250) is used to support the Summer Youth Employment Program and that no match is required for this portion. Mr. Bridges then introduced Dr. Stilwell to answer any questions that the Council might have.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Hurley moved **“TO APPROVE THE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD AND QUISENBERRY / ARCARI ARCHITECTS LLC FOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION SERVICES FOR THE WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT PHASE I”**, seconded by Councilor Drake.

Mr. Bridges explained that the staff, the town attorney and the architects have been reviewing along with the building committee, the architects proposed contract for services related to the design and construction of the Wethersfield High School renovation project. He stated that the proposal is before the council this evening and explained that the estimated cost is \$3,217,431 which is \$172,500 under budgeted amount. Mr. Bridges stated that there is an outstanding issue with the insurance and that we are still working through that with Carla and the architect which should be resolved tomorrow, so if you are inclined to approve this, we are asking that you approve it subject to the insurance fee approval. Mr. Bridges added that this was the result of a Phase II process and that the Phase I took place in 2008 and it was a request for proposal for architectural services which not only included the prereferendum services but the post referendum services which is what your contracting for this evening. Mr. Bridges announced that the architect is here this evening to answer any of your questions as well as the Chairman of the Building Committee and Attorney DiVincentis who has worked on this contract.

Councilor Drake commented that the Building Committee had a couple of meetings and really went through this in detail before it went to Jeff and the attorney.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

BIDS

None.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RESOLUTION AWARDED PRE-REFERENDUM WORK OF WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

RESOLVED, that the language of the prior resolution on pre-referendum services dated August 11th, 2008, be clarified to state that the Wethersfield Town Council hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the renovations and additions at Wethersfield High School.

Mr. Bridges commented that another point on the High School project that Rusty and Susan have gotten the application submitted to the State of Connecticut on time and in their hands and it has

been accepted by the State. Mr. Bridges stated that we just need to clarify some language in one of the existing resolutions at our next council meeting.

MINUTES

Councilor Kotkin moved **“TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 2, 2012”** seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-2. Councilors Hurley and Montinieri abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., commented on the tax bill form and the need of inserting a footnote to identify some accounting transfers of money. He also encouraged creating a plan that is more adaptable to people who don't use certain services in town in an effort to reduce the tax burden on those individuals.

Barbara Ruhe, 79 Main St. commented that Wethersfield is town of Tradition and believes that on July 2, and every town council meeting just before the fourth of July, the Declaration of Independence should be read in honor of the fourth of July.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:30 p.m., Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE.

The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by Vote of Council
July 16, 2012